

CALIFORNIA LATINO CAUCUS



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New Latino Caucus Member Profile

Assembly Member Norma J. Torres



Norma Torres didn't choose to become politically active; she was just doing her job when a life changing call came into the 9-1-1 center where she was working. The caller only spoke Spanish and by the time the call was transferred to her, all she could hear was the sound of five bullets hitting and killing a young girl. This tragic call spurred her to lead the charge to require bilingual dispatchers at LAPD's 9-1-1 center. She built a coalition from the west San Fernando Valley to the Eastside of Los Angeles and forced the police department to change its policy.

After leading that successful effort, she became active in her neighborhood association, helping to lead a grassroots effort to defeat a proposed mega-development at the Fairplex in Pomona. She used these experiences to help craft her neighborhood empowerment message when she ran for Pomona City Council the following year.

While on the City Council, she helped pass

the state's first ordinance preventing sex offenders from living near Pomona's schools and businesses or together in large group homes.

Norma then won a special election and became Mayor of Pomona. As mayor, she worked to strengthen public safety, restored lost firefighter positions, and cracked down on gangs and drug crimes. She also worked to bring new businesses to Pomona through the many development projects that began under her watch.

She is a member of the Democratic National Committee and served as a Presidential Elector for Barack Obama, appointed by Congresswoman Grace Napolitano.

Norma emigrated from Guatemala at the age of five. She is the first woman to be awarded the Guatemalan Congressional Medal of Honor, "*La Orden De Gran Caballero*", bestowed upon her by the Congress of the Republic of Guatemala in 2006 in recognition of her political achievements in the US. Norma is the only person living outside of Guatemala to receive this award.

She brings a lifetime of community service to the State Assembly. As a member of A.F.S.C.M.E. Local 3090, she stands squarely with California's working families during these tough economic times.

Norma lives in Pomona with her husband, Louis, and their three sons, Robert, Chris and Matt.